Grammar Notes

**Plural Nouns**

Chinese **nouns**are generally not marked for being either singular or plural.  They rely on context to note whether one or more than one is intended.  For example, "I have a book" and "I have books" could be said in the same way.

**Pronouns**are a great way to clarify the meaning.  "我 ", " 你 ", and " 他/她 " are all singular.  Adding "“directly to the end of the pronoun makes it plural.  That is all that is needed to be done in most sentences, as Chinese grammar does not require subject-verb agreement.

**He/She/It**

Chinese has a single pronunciation “tā“ for the pronouns for "他", "她", and "它".  Whether an object is male or female; human, animal, or object, the same pronunciation is used.  The only way to determine what is intended is by the context (or in writing).

Additionally, Mandarin pronouns do not change depending on whether they are subjects or objects, they remain the same.  In English "I" becomes "me", "he" becomes "him" and "she" becomes "her".  But the Chinese pronouns do not change in its written form. For example:

? Do you have a pencil? (as a subject)

。I like you. (as an object)

Top of Form

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Possessive Pronoun

In Chinese, general pronouns can be converted to possessive pronoun by adding the word “的”behind those pronouns. For example：

(you) – (your, yours)

(I, me) – (my, mine)

(you) – (your, yours)

(who, whom)– (whose)

Bottom of Form

Bottom of Form

**Written Forms**

**Including Gender**

Even though there is one pronunciation for "he", "she" and "it", there are multiple characters. 他 is for males or when used in the plural with mixed genders, 她 is for females, and 它is for animals or objects.

**Formal Characters**

In addition to the standard pronouns, there are also some formal versions.  The most common of these is , which is a more respectful form of "you".